

Industrial Relations Department
Monthly Report for February 1948

TO: George H. Robinson
Executive Secretary

FROM: Roy E. Norris
Industrial Relations Secretary

EDUCATIONAL
RELATIONS
WITH EMPLOYERS

Machinists
Project:

The Industrial Relations Secretary's January report described the Machinists' Project and announced the point of selection of the first employee. During February, the second notch on our yardstick was reached; the Industrial Relations Secretary placed the first Negro Machinist on the Project. Although the starting rate for Machinists in the plant is 85¢ an hour, our young man started at \$1.05 an hour, an indication of a good job done with outstanding overtones. The Machinist Union is pledged to accept this new worker before the expiration of his trial period. Reports of this Union's practices in other plants, with respect to admission of Negroes, proves a further testimony to the high level of skill developed in the Machinist Project.

The young man is a graduate of Hampton Institute, and his selection was the result of our unsuccessful search for the right man over the Newark-New Brunswick-New York City area, and two lengthy telephone calls from officials at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia. We had previously included Hampton Institute in our project, and officials there hail this placement on the Project as the most significant and promising development for Negro Machinists since the end of the war.

Art Field: Because of the application of a recent high school graduate, convinced of her ability as a fashion artist, and the comments of critics to whom we showed her work, we undertook a special job of placing her. More than a year ago, the Industrial Relations Secretary worked with several employers in this field, and so, on the basis of this particular applicant, renewed efforts and finally developed an opening. Although the young lady's father had come in to add his interest in our securing a placement for his daughter, in the commercial art field, the young lady did not respond when we secured an opening for her in a Newark Advertising agency. We saw the applicant before the father came to the office; on his two visits he has seemed to have other business with our agency. It appears that between his two visits he lost sight of his responsibility also.

Somewhere, here is a problem. I don't propose to assay the causes; I know only the results. Your Secretary developed an opening in Newark in a field in which Negroes have not been employed; something else prevented the placement of the particular "interested" applicant.

Investigations of Employment Discrimination: During February, information was compiled that shows a highly questionable pattern of hiring or firing in two important plants in the greater Newark area. For technical reasons these are not cases acceptable for processing by the Division Against Discrimination. Any acceptable "evidence" will be referred to the DAD, but the Industrial Relations Secretary shall confer with officials of each plant involved on the basis of an apparent pattern. The Industrial Relations Secretary has asked a personal friend of the President of one of the firms to raise a question about the impression the community is getting as a result of the company's racial practices.

Our previous contacts with these officials show this approach a wise beginning on the present problem.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Household
Employment
Program:

A Luncheon of the Household Employment Steering Committee, succeeded in stimulating the State Office of the New Jersey State Employment Service to accept the responsibility of developing consideration towards a statement of policy and standards, based on recommendations of the North Jersey Household Employment Program, and to authorize each local office

placement clerk to interpret to employers and employees on that basis. This was significant success since the local N.J.S.E.S. offices over the State have been loathe to do much more than a job of quick referring of applicants to jobs, orders for which have been accepted strictly as given by the employer.

An energetic and welcome recruit came to us as a result of a newspaper article about our Program. Our additional manpower is of Polish extraction and is extremely interested that our program not bog down into a mere Negro-white problem. We have already put him in touch with groups in Montclair and Glen Ridge. He, as have other committee members, is speaking to club women's groups on Standards.

The importation of Puerto Ricans into New York for household work (under a sort of ("indentured servant" idea) and the use of European refugees as household workers in this area for fifteen dollars a week, serve to spark the importance of our efforts. The Newark offices, N.J.S.E.S., reports more applicants now than jobs for household work - a great change in the last ten months.

Industrial Council
of Urban Leagues
and Similar Agencies:

Through the close coordination of the Industrial Council of Urban Leagues & Similar Agencies, of industrial relations work of all League affiliates in New Jersey, we secured immediate and suitable housing in Elizabeth, near the job-location, for the Machinist on the N.J.U.L. Machinist Project. The Elizabeth Urban League is advising with the newcomer in terms of establishing himself satisfactorily in the community.

In connection with the same plant in Elizabeth, Your Secretary developed an opening for the first Negro white collar worker there, as a stenographer, the placement was completed through the Elizabeth Urban League.

EMPLOYMENT

Vocational Guidance

The Vocational Opportunity Campaign is scheduled from March 14-24. A representative of the North Jersey Chapter of the

Vocational
Opportunity
Campaign:

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, a national college womens' organization, bailed the Industrial Relations Secretary and offered cooperation with the N.J.U.L. VOC this year. Your Industrial Relations Secretary then organized a North Jersey Vocational Opportunity Committee, with representatives of several public schools, all of the Urban Leagues (except the Englewood Urban League), and several YM and YWCA's, over northern New Jersey, to stimulate and coordinate a Vocational Opportunity Campaign. The chairman of that committee is Miss Louise Baxter, of Newark. Observances will be held in nine cities. Almost every junior and senior high school in Newark has scheduled a special Assembly, movies, or a Career-Conference, in observance of our VOC; each of the Essex County Vocational Schools will have special observances; community committees have arranged

movies or Forums in Montclair, Hackensack, and Jersey City; the YMCA's in Summit and East Orange have arranged Career-Day Conferences and each Local Urban League is gearing its efforts to the total plan.

Your Industrial Relations Secretary secured free time for four (4) radio broadcasts: March 14, WNJR, 5:00 to 5:15 P.M.; March 16, WAAF, 8:45 to 9:00 P.M.; March 17, WBCO, 1:45 to 2:15; March 19, WBCO, 1:45 to 2:15 P.M. He is writing the script for these broadcasts that include two Forums and two discussions centered around two dramatic plays. The Campaign theme is "The Future is Yours, Plan and Prepare". Mr. Oliver Randolph and Mr. Frederick Landolphi, Director of Vocational Guidance, Newark Public Schools, are among the Forum discussants; Canada Lee is the Narrator for the two plays.

Your Industrial Relations Secretary secured one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) for this year's VOC. We shall distribute 7,500 "Your Career" (vocational guidance) leaflets among the senior classes of junior and senior high schools. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority contributed fifty dollars (\$50), and is particularly interested in distribution of material in Montclair, Hackensack, and Jersey City. Some 2,500 leaflets were ordered for this purpose. Other available materials, too costly for wide distribution, are being placed in the hands of school officials, counselors, and civic workers.

Counseling: Four persons were referred for vocational counselling, from other agencies; and seven other persons came of their own accord. Men and women continue to seek the department's help on Unemployment Compensation claims. Ten to sixteen weeks have elapsed in two notable cases filed here, without any checks being sent to claimants. A statement by Mr. Hoffman carried by the Newark Evening News, avers that lack of funds, and a resulting cut in staff, are the reasons for undue delays. This should not be. Your Industrial Relations Secretary should like to ask the interest of the Board in urging upon Mr. Hoffman and Governor Driscoll due concern about the serious financial problem claimants experience, that social agencies are all but powerless to alleviate satisfactorily, when claims are not expedited, and claimants are out of work and need the income. The principle of unemployment compensation is to provide persons with some income when they are out of work and need income; not income at some remote future date.

There was a total of seventy-eight (78) applicants, of twenty males and 43 females; twenty-four (24) referrals, of one (1) male and twenty-three (23) females. The largest majority of our referrals (12) were for white collar work, clerical and sales.